

National Director's Message



Dear Friends,

As part of MBDA's commitment to continuously refine our customer services and communicate regularly with our clients, I would like to introduce to you our newly designed newsletter, *MBDA E-News*.

MBDA E-News will provide current news and information about MBDA programs and issues of importance to the minority business enterprise community as well as other stakeholders.

As the only Federal agency established to foster the growth of minority-owned businesses in America, MBDA is committed to providing quality business enterprise services to help minority firms succeed in the global marketplace.

On behalf of the MBDA family, I hope that you find *MBDA E-News* enjoyable and useful for your business needs.

I also would like to wish you a warm holiday season and a happy new year.

Sincerely,

Ronald N. Langston
National Director

Department of Commerce Assists MBEs in Gulf Region Rebuilding

By Ivonne Cunarro Klein



MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston joins Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez announcing the establishment of the Hurricane Contracting Information Center to help businesses participate in the Gulf Coast rebuilding efforts.

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez met with leaders of various minority trade associations to discuss assisting small and minority businesses in the Gulf Region rebuilding efforts. "Our mission at the Commerce Department is to be an advocate for the nation's businesses and the business community," said Secretary Gutierrez. "The administration is reaching out to companies of all sizes, especially minority-owned enterprises, to guarantee that those seeking to join the rebuilding efforts can navigate federal agencies and bid for contracts."

During that meeting, the Secretary announced the Department of Commerce Hurricane Contracting Information Center (HCIC) that will help U.S. businesses, especially minority and small businesses, participate in the Gulf Coast rebuilding efforts. "The center provides the necessary information to U.S. businesses to participate in Gulf Coast contracting, subcontracting and reconstruction," Gutierrez said.

Since the Secretary's meeting, MBDA has been at the forefront reaching out to minority business enterprises (MBEs) affected by Hurricane Katrina and identifying procurement opportunities in the region. MBDA redirected \$300,000 of FY 2005 funds to the Houston Minority Business Development Center (MBDC), operated by Grijalva & Allen, PC, to bolster recovery operations.

Over 600 businesses have contacted the MBDC through their minority business outreach operations, MBDA's website registry, and the Houston's Disaster Recovery Center, a Federal interagency disaster center.

In addition, MBDC business development specialists have visited with over 250 minority firms which had been displaced from Louisiana and Texas to determine their needs. They have assisted firms with applications for disaster relief, emergency loans, business plans, insurance claims, reconstruction of records, and other technical support. The Center has also identified MBEs for potential contracting opportunities in the reconstruction of the region.

Also, in November MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston and Dallas Regional Director John Iglehart joined Acting Assistant Secretary Sandy Baruah and Economic Development Agency officials in their visit to Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Langston and Iglehart toured the most affected areas in New Orleans and visited with Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden, members of the Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce and key officials from Southern University and Louisiana University, among other representatives.

"Many minority-owned firms lost everything as a result of the hurricane," said Langston. "We are encouraged that these efforts will contribute to securing the participation of more MBEs in the economic recovery of the Gulf region," he said.

MBDA's support is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Hurricane Contracting Information Center. Firms interested in contracting opportunities can visit www.rebuildingthegulfcoast.gov, or call 1-888-4USADOC.

Hurricane Contracting Information Center www.RebuildingTheGulfCoast.gov

About HCIC:

The Hurricane Contracting Information Center provides a central point of reference for businesses, especially minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses and small- and medium-size enterprises, to register for and become aware of federal contracting opportunities in the Gulf Coast. While the HCIC does not award contracts, our mission is to ensure that businesses understand the process and are aware when opportunities become available.

MED Week's 'Art of the Deal' Inspires Audiences



Ronald N. Langston, MBDA National Director; Allegra McCullough, SBA Associate Deputy Administrator for Government Contracting and Business Development; MED Week Chairs Benita Fortner from Raytheon Company, Howard Li, Chairman and CEO of Waitex International, and Brenda Schneider from Comerica Bank, are joined by MBDA staff and participants during the ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of the Business Expo at the MED Week Conference.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez, in his maiden appearance at the 23rd Annual National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference, "*The Art of the Deal: Making It Happen*," focused his remarks on Hurricane Katrina and the important role of minority entrepreneurs in the U.S. economy. Gutierrez who had just returned from visiting the areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina encouraged minority entrepreneurs to participate in restoring the region.

"Minority entrepreneurs will play an increasingly important role in keeping the U.S. economy strong and globally competitive," said Gutierrez during his keynote address.

The four-day conference, held in September in Washington D.C., was filled with high quality workshops on forging strategic alliances, accessing capital, and commercializing technology, among other topics. MED week is sponsored by MBDA and the Small Business Administration's Office of Government Contracting and Business Development.

Among other extraordinary speakers, X Prize Foundation CEO Peter Diamandis energized the audience of business entrepreneurs. Diamandis, who led the Foundation that awarded \$10 million to a team who designed the first privately financed spaceship, inspired the audience to dream big and follow through in achieving that dream.

At the conference, MBDA released a preliminary report, *State of Minority Business*

Enterprises (MBEs). The analysis showed that MBEs are growing at a fast pace, however the participation rate, size and gross receipts of these firms still lag behind that of the non minority population.

"The state of minority businesses is strong, however more needs to be done to reach entrepreneurial parity," said MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston. "If MBEs enjoyed full participation today, 6.7 million firms would be supporting the economy and communities across the nation," he said.

Langston presented Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta with the Ronald H. Brown Leadership Award for his leadership and commitment to economic development. Congressman J.D. Hayworth (R-AZ), Congressman Albert Wynn (D-MD), and Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) received the National Director's Legacy Award for Public Service for their work in support of minority-owned firms.

During the MED Week Conference, MBDA also recognized several minority entrepreneurs with national awards for their entrepreneurship, support of minority businesses and community leadership.

MBDA's five National Enterprise Centers, located in Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, New York, and San Francisco, also held MED Week activities in their regions. MED Week was made possible with the support of public and private sector partners.



Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez addresses participants at the 23rd Annual National MED Week Conference.

Minority Businesses Growth Outpace all U.S. Firms

By Ivonne Cunarro Klein

MBDA's preliminary report, *State of Minority Business Enterprises* (MBEs), indicates that the number of MBEs are growing at a faster pace in number when compared to all U.S. firms. The number of minority-owned firms grew 35 percent to 4.1 million between 1997 and 2002, while all U.S. firms grew only 10 percent. The preliminary overview, released in September, is based on statistics from the *U.S. Census' 2002 Survey of Small Business Owners* released this year.

During the same period the total gross receipts for minority-owned firms grew 17 percent to \$694 billion and the number of paid employees grew to 4.8 million. While this is good news for minority businesses, several challenges remain. In 2002, minorities 18 years and older represented 29 percent of the U.S. population, but only 18 percent of all U.S. firms. These same firms collected 3 percent of all revenues and employed 4 percent of all paid employees in the United States.

"By the year 2050, the U.S. population will be 50 percent minority," said MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston. "To remain competitive in a global economy, we must grow the size, scale and capabilities of MBEs."

For a copy of the report, please visit www.mbd.gov.

University of Chicago Student Wins Best Business Plan Award

by Ivonne Cunarro Klein



MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston presents Kai Wright, University of Chicago student, with the Best Business Plan award during MED Week Conference's 23rd Annual Awards Gala.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A student from the University of Chicago won the coveted Best Business Plan award at the 23rd Annual National MED Week Conference, held in September in Washington D.C. Business student Kai Wright won the award for his business plan to launch the cutting edge online magazine *Accent*.

Wright participated in the Emerging Business Leaders Summit (EBLS), a four-day program that inspires minority students to consider entrepreneurship as a career. The Summit took place concurrently with the MED Week Conference entitled, "*The Art of the Deal: Making it Happen.*"

In his plan, Wright leverages services provided by the University of Chicago to reduce cost and increase efficiencies in the production of the magazine. *Accent* targets college students and young adults. A panel of experts judged the business plans presented by participating students at the Summit and chose the winner.

About 50 students participated in the EBLS program, which offers seminars on capital development, marketing, business plan development and emerging trends in the marketplace. Students also met with minority-business entrepreneurs and attended the MED Week Conference. This competitive program covers the costs of hotel, travel and the conference for all selected students. For more information on this annual program, please visit www.mbda.gov.

2005 National Minority Entrepreneur of the Year Awards



Minority Female Entrepreneur

Elizabeth Gonzalez-Gann
JanCo Janitorial
Tucson, AZ

Minority Male Entrepreneur

Derrick, Gregory and Anthony Martin
M.B. Investments/Lena's Foods
Milwaukee, WI

Minority Business Advocate

Simeon O. Terry
Austin Commercial, L.P.
Dallas, TX

Minority Retail Firm

Dalip Singh Sethi
Singh Chevrolet
Riverside, CA

Minority Construction Firm

Jorge Munilla
MCM Corporation
Miami, FL

Minority Service Firm

Rudy J. Alvarado
Advancia Corporation
Oklahoma City, OK

Minority Exporter

Aston Lue
Ocho Rios Miami, Inc.
Miami, FL

Minority Supplier/Distributor

C. Sam McGee
All Points Logistics, Inc.
Gainesville, GA

Minority Manufacturer

Carlton L. Highsmith
The Specialized Packaging Group, Inc.
Hamden, CT

Minority Technology Firm

Christian D'Andrade
CBX Technologies, Inc.
Oakland, CA

Minority Media Cornerstone

Nathaniel Abraham, Sr.
Carolina Panorama
Columbia, SC

For more information about MED Week, please visit www.mbda.gov.

Singh Chevrolet Wins National Minority Retail Award

By Albert Eskenazi



MBDA National Director Ronald N. Langston presents Mr. Dalip Singh Sethi with the National Minority Enterprise Retail Firm of the Year Award.

MBDA recognized Dalip Singh Sethi, President of Singh Chevrolet, as the National Minority Enterprise Retail Firm of the Year during the MED Week Conference. He received the award for his entrepreneurship and community leadership.

Born in India, Sethi, came to the United States thirty years ago. After graduating with a master's degree in operations management from Northrop University in California, he could not get a job in his field. Desperate to find work he was willing to wash cars for a living. Instead he was offered a car salesman job.

Within two years Sethi was promoted to car sales manager. In 1980, he acquired a dealership, and in 1997, became the principal of a larger Chevrolet dealership in Riverside, California. The business was losing \$1 million a year, but he made it profitable within a year with \$39 million in sales. In 2004, he grew the business from 94 to 120 employees with sales topping at \$74 million.

Sethi shares his success with the community. He gives one-tenth of his income to community-based and educational programs. In 2001, he started the Perfect Score program, in which he donates a car to students with perfect attendance in participating high schools. In addition, he donates computers and scholarships to second, third and fourth place winners and has expanded the program to middle schools. He has also persuaded other businesses to get involved in helping students succeed.

Singh Chevrolet has worked with the Inland Empire Minority Business Development Center (MBDC), located in Riverside, California that is funded by MBDA.

REGIONAL NEWS

DCMBDC Helps Baltimore MBE Manage Growth

By Avis Allen and Imani Bennett

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Washington Metro Minority Business Development Center has built an impressive track record through its hands-on growth strategy for minority business enterprises (MBEs). So far this year the center, directed by Reginald Richter, has secured \$44.4 million in procurement, debt and bonding transactions for MBEs.

Among its clients, the center provides services to Paniagua's Enterprises, Inc., a Baltimore cabling firm that designs, engineers and installs fiber optic cable for major digital cable companies. Mexican-American Jaime Paniagua launched the firm in 1999 after taking college business courses and receiving on-the-job training.

The center's Program Services Director Ulhas Kamat met Paniagua when the company was experiencing growing pains typical of a successful young firm. Kamat helped Paniagua refine his business strategy to expand capacity for larger contracts.

With Kamat's guidance, Paniagua will more than double its past revenues of \$1.5 million this year. The firm has already secured \$2.3 million in business deals, including a contract with the City of Baltimore, where the company is a certified MBE.

The center has also assisted Paniagua in securing bonding for \$1.5 million. Through ongoing assistance from DCMBDC, Paniagua's Enterprises will obtain state and federal certifications, making it eligible for more contracts.

Michigan's MBDC Partners with NFL

By Ivonne Cunarro Klein

DETROIT, MI. - MBDA's Michigan Statewide Minority Business Development Center (MBDC) has established a strategic partnership with the National Football League (NFL) to identify Michigan minority business enterprises (MBEs) for procurement opportunities.

Through the NFL's Emerging Business Program, the MBDC has identified nearly 100 MBEs which are interested in supporting the production of Super Bowl XL, which will be held in Detroit in February 2006.

The NFL is seeking Michigan minority-owned firms which can provide a variety of services, from audio visuals and event planning, to carpentry and computer services. MBDC's Executive Director Ronald Frederick has assisted minority business owners with certifications and held workshops on writing winning contracts for Super Bowl activities, and establishing strategic alliances and joint ventures.

"We would like to encourage every major sporting event to establish programs like the NFL's Emerging Business Program which are key to introducing qualified MBEs to the supply

chain," said Eric Dobyne, Chicago's MBDA Regional Director.

The program's intent is to create ongoing business opportunities for participating MBEs beyond the Super Bowl. Established in 1994, the program represents an opportunity for MBEs in cities where future Super Bowls will be held. Super Bowls 2007 thru 2010 will be hosted in Miami, Phoenix, Tampa, and Miami, consecutively.

San Francisco's Region Strikes Gold for MBEs

By Albert N. Eskenazi

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - MBDA's San Francisco National Enterprise Center and its Los Angeles Regional Enterprise Center are striking gold for their minority-owned firms clients. This year Regional Director Linda Marie Marmolejo challenged its business development team with assisting minority business enterprises in securing \$8 million in financing and large procurement contracts. The Region secured \$65,078,223 in transactions for minority-owned firms, surpassing its goal by 805 percent.

Marmolejo led the reorganization of operations into business teams to support the new goals. Key members are senior financial and business development specialists, including Maria Acosta, Dr. Sean Subas, Albert N. Eskenazi and William Houston.

HR

The MBDA family is saddened by the passing of **Raul Quiros**, a former business development specialist with the Office of Business Development. He had retired in August after 26 years of service. Quiros was highly regarded for his compassion and dedication to supporting small and minority businesses.

Career Moves

By Michael Barber

Bridget Gonzales was appointed Chief, Office of the Associate Director for Legislation, Education and Intergovernmental Affairs on October 2. Gonzales brings over 20 years of professional experience to MBDA with an expertise in public affairs, public policy, and public administration. As the new Chief of the Office of Legislative, Education and Intergovernmental Affairs, Gonzales will oversee key Agency activities including congressional and intergovernmental relations, public affairs, media relations and the National MED Week Conference. Before coming to MBDA, Gonzales served as Vice President for Edelman Public Relations, the world's largest independent public relations firm. Prior to this position, she was an Assistant Vice President for Issue Dynamics, Inc., and Legislative Director for Congresswoman, now, Senator Debbie Stabenow.

Fayleen Baker joined MBDA as a Budget Analyst for the Office of Administration and Financial Management, on July 10. Baker has 13 years of experience working for the Department of Defense. For the past five years, she has worked in budget execution as a budget technician.

Ivonne Cunarro Klein was appointed Public Affairs Specialist for the Office of Legislative, Education and Intergovernmental Affairs. She has served as Executive Director and CEO for the National Association of Hispanic Publications, Director of Communications for Congressman José E. Serrano, Deputy Director of Communications for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and Director of Communications for the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility.

Velicia Woods is a new Business Development Specialist at the Chicago National Enterprise Center. She joined the MBDA on September 19, and has a strong communications background in program development and process mapping. Woods rose through the ranks of the Chicago Minority Business Development Council where she was appointed Director of Certification and Communications.

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For more information, please visit www.mbda.gov.